

Message Text

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TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 28 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. WIDE PRESS COVERAGE WAS GIVEN TO DISCLOSURE BY RE-
SEARCH OFFICIALS FROM U.S. AND BRITAIN THAT THEY HAVE
DEVELOPED NEW NUCLEAR BREEDER REACTOR AND FUEL PROCESSING
SYSTEM THAT CAN VIRTUALLY ELIMINATE THREAT OF ATOMIC WEA-
PON PROLIFERATION. DR. WALTER MARSHALL OF BRITISH ATOMIC
ENERGY AUTHORITY AND DR. CHAUNCEY STARR OF U.S. ELECTRIC
POWER RESEARCH INSTITUTE SAID THEIR NUCLEAR FUEL RECYCLING
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SYSTEM WOULD ELIMINATE PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM PURE ENOUGH
TO BE USED IN BOMBS. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED UPI REPORT
WHICH SAID "UNLIKE CONVENTIONAL REPROCESSING METHODS WHICH
DIVIDE SPENT REACTOR FUEL INTO THREE TYPES OF PRODUCTS --
URANIUM, PLUTONIUM AND SOME WASTES MIXED TOGETHER IN SUB-
STANCE SO RADIOACTIVE THAT IT WOULD KILL ANYONE TRYING TO
STEAL IT." NEW YORK TIMES SAID PLANTS USING SO-CALLED

CIVEX PROCESS WOULD CARRY OUT ALL STEPS BY REMOTE CONTROL IN "HOT CELLS," INCLUDING REFASHIONING OF NEW FUEL FOR RETURN TO BRDDE'S SODIUM-COOLED ORE. STARR AND MARSHALL SAID PROCESS, UNDER STUDY FOR LAST YEAR, REPRESENTED COM-

BINATION OF TECHNIQUES, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN TESTED ON LABORATORY SCALE IN U.S. OR BRITAIN. TIMES SAID PILOT PLANT TO TEST ECONOMICS OF CIVEX SYSTEM WOULD COST AN ESTIMATED 100 MILLION DOLLARS TO BUILD AND AT LEAST 30 MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY TO OPERATE DURING DECADE OF TESTING.

2. RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK TIMES SAID ADMINISTRATION'S MIDEAST FIGHTER PLANE PACKAGE "WAS ONE OF TOUGHEST AND MOST EXHAUSTIVE DECISION-MAKING EXERCISES IN WHICH ADMINISTRATION HAS YET ENGAGED." NOTING THAT PROPOSED SALE OF PLANES TO EGYPT, ISRAEL AND SAUDI ARABIA WAS TO BE TREATED AS SINGLE, 4.8 BILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE AND WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS ON TAKE-IT OR LEAVE-IT BASIS, BURT REPORTED THAT OFFICIALS "BELIEVE WHITE HOUSE HAS STRUCK ON RIGHT FORMULA FOR ACHIEVING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL AND GREASING WHEELS OF MIDDLE EAST DETENTE. THEY ALSO ARGUE THAT PROCESS FOR REACHING THEIR DECISION OVER SALES EMBODIED BEST FEATURES OF ADMINISTRATION'S OPEN, COLLEGIAL AND SOMETIMES CHAOTIC APPROACH TO POLICY-MAKING -- EFFORT TO EXPOSE MR. CARTER TO WIDE RANGE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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DEPARTMENTAL VIEWS."

3. BERNARD GWERTZMAN OF NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT ADMINISTRATION "HAS BOWED TO SOME STRONG CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION AND DEFERRED INDEFINITELY PLAN TO SELL AIRCRAFT AND HELICOPTERS TO MOROCCO FOR USE IN WESTERN SAHARA AGAINST ALGERIAN-BACKED GUERRILLAS." GWERTZMAN QUOTED STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AS SAYING SECRETARY VANCE DECIDED TO POSTPONE ACTION ON MOROCCO'S URGENT REQUEST FOR MORE THAN 100 MILLION DOLLARS IN COUNTERINSURGENCY PLANES AND HELICOPTERS FOR TWO BASIC REASONS: OPPOSITION VOICED BY SOME INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND CONCERN ABOUT HAVING TO DEFEND CONTROVERSIAL SALE TO MOROCCO AT TIME WHEN ADMINISTRATION WAS FACING SEVERE CRITICISM OF ITS 4.8 BILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE OF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

4. CLARENCE A. ROBINSON, JR., WRITING IN FEB. 27 AVIATION WEEK AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY, SAID USSR IS OPERATING 64 BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINES IN VIOLATION OF INTERIM OFFENSIVE AGREEMENT THAT BINDS BOTH SIDES PENDING COMPLETION OF SECOND SALT ACCORD. "UNDER INTERIM PACT, USSR IS

PERMITTED 62 BALLISTIC MISSILE BOATS WITH AN AGGREGATE
950 LAUNCHERS. INTERIM AGREEMENT EXPIRED OCT. 3, 1977,
BUT BOTH SIDES SAID THEY WOULD RESPECT IT UNTIL IT IS
REPLACED WITH NEW AGREEMENT. IN ADDITION TO 64 BALLISTIC
MISSILE SUBMARINES ALREADY AT SEA, SOVIETS HAVE THREE
DELTA CLASS SUBMARINES OUTFITTED AND READY TO PUT TO SEA.

THAT IS PARTIALLY REASON WHY OFFICIAL SOVIET NEWSPAPER,
PRAVDA, RECENTLY CALLED FOR RAPID CONCLUSION OF SALT
TWO TREATY, U.S. STRATEGIC ARMS EXPERTS SAID." ROBINSON
QUOTED ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AS SAYING THAT WITH
LIMIT IN SALT ONE ACCORD, "RUSSIANS ARE SHACKLED BECAUSE
THEY ARE MOVING MORE AND MORE OF THEIR NUCLEAR ARMED
MISSILES TO SEA, PHASING OUT OLDER ICBM'S, AND THEY ARE
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STYMIED UNTIL SALT TWO IS RATIFIED." U.S. OFFICIALS,
ROBINSON REPORTED, SAID THAT "IN ADDITION TO DELTA
SUBMARINES NOW AT SEA, THERE ARE ANOTHER SIX OR SEVEN
HOTEL CLASS BOATS BEING OPERATED THAT ALSO ARE OVER
LIMIT IN SALT ONE. 'PART OF PROBLEM IS THAT SOVIETS SAID
THEY WERE DISMANTLING SOME OF OLDER BALLISTIC MISSILE
SUBMARINES, BUT THERE IS NO REAL MOVE ON THEIR PART TO DO
THAT,' ANOTHER U.S. OFFICIAL SAID. 'THIS IS JUST ANOTHER
EXAMPLE OF RUSSIAN CHARACTERISTIC TO SEE HOW FAR THEY CAN
PUSH UNTIL WE CALL THEM ON IT,' OFFICIAL ADDED. 'IT WAS
ONLY EAR OR SO BACK WHEN WE HAD TO DEMAND THAT THEY DIS-
MANTLE THOSE SS-7 AND SS-8 ICBM LAUNCHERS TO COMPENSATE
FOR SUBMARINES ARMED WITH BALLISTIC MISSILE LAUNCHERS.
THEY WERE IN VIOLATION OF INTERIM TREATY THEN,' OFFICIAL
ADDED." VANCE

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